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Past Principals of Ontario Normal Schools

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PAST PRINCIPALS

OF

ONTARIO NORMAL SCHOOLS

JANUARY, 1905

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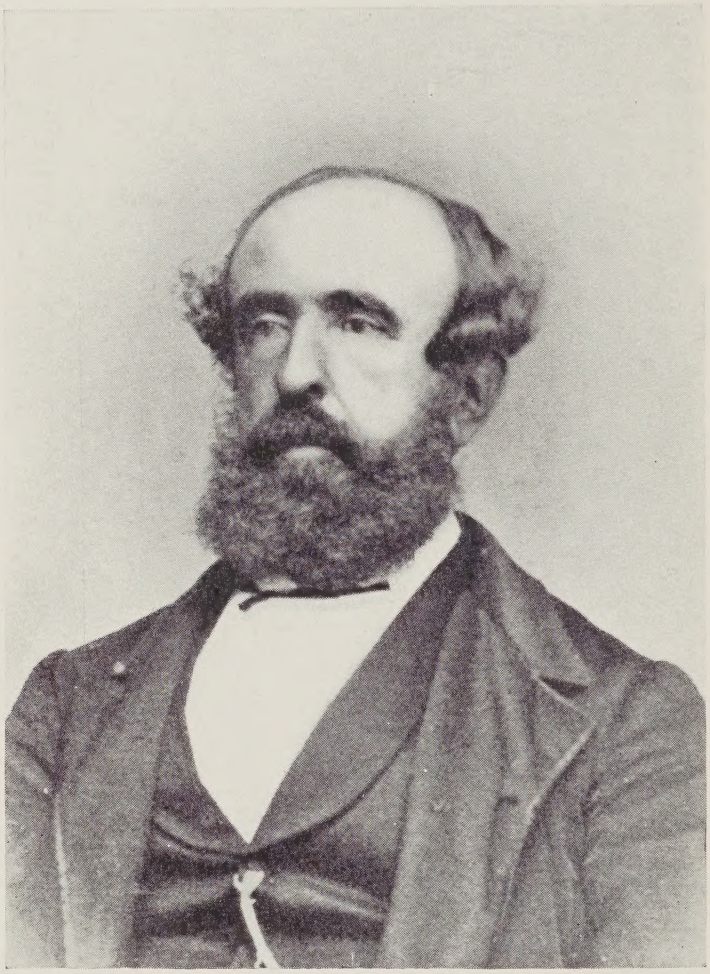

Thomas Jaffray Robertson, M.A.

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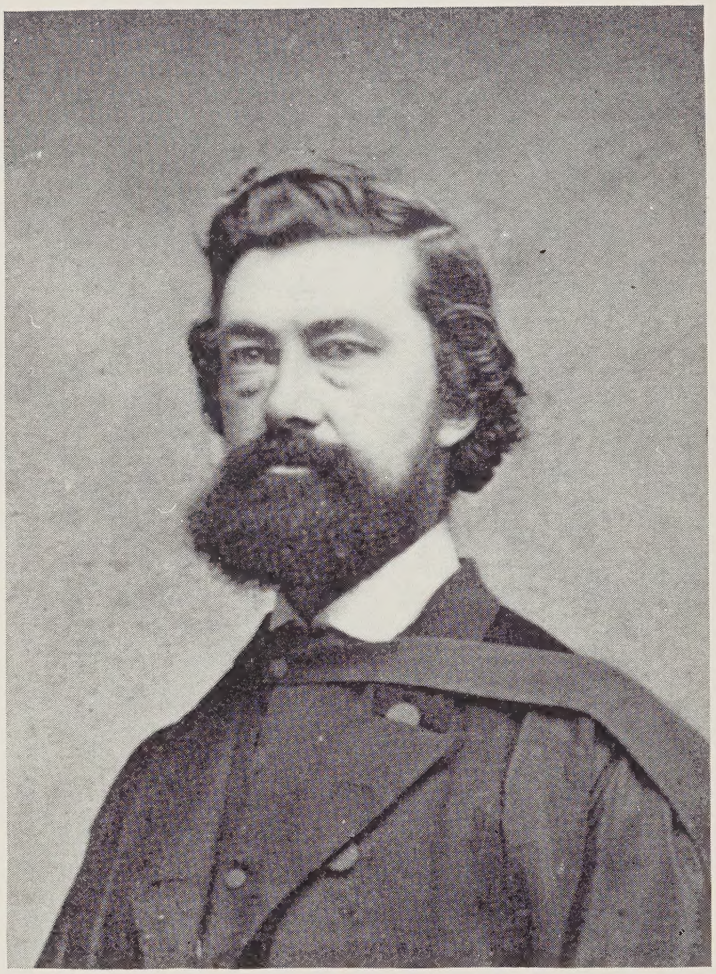
THOMAS JAFFRAY ROBERTSON, the first principal of the Toronto Normal School, was born in Dublin, Ireland, in March, 1805. He was educated at the Frinaiglian Institute in Dublin and Trinity College of that city.

In the years 1827 and 1828, he was classical teacher in the Frinaiglian Institute. After this he entered the Irish Office of Education and in May, 1832, was appointed an Inspector of the National Schools. In 1838 he was appointed Senior Assistant to the General Superintendent of the National Schools. Soon after this appointment he married Amelia, daughter of Richard Nelson, Solicitor of Dublin. In July, 1845, he was promoted to the office of Chief Inspector of National Schools of Ireland.

In 1847, Mr. Robertson was recommended to Dr. Ryerson, the Chief Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada, by the Commissioners of Education of Ireland, for the position of Principal of the Normal School in Toronto. He accepted the position and reached Toronto in September, 1847. The first session was opened on November 1st of that year in the vacant Government House.

Mr. Robertson was the author of "The Philosophy of Grammar," a book which did much in Upper Canada to lift grammar from being a mere mechanical repetition of rules and exceptions to becoming the "logic of the schoolroom."

During the winter of 1865-6 Mr. Robertson's health failed him. He died on September 26th, 1866, after a service of nearly twenty years, during the formative period of our public school system.



John Herbert Sangster, M.A., M.D.

John Herbert Sangster, M.A., M.D.

DR. SANGSTER, second principal of the Toronto Normal School, was born in London, England, March 26th, 1831. He was educated at Upper Canada College, the Toronto Normal School, and Victoria University, Cobourg, from which he was graduated M.A. in 1861, and M.D. in 1864. He attended the Toronto Normal School during the first session in 1847-8, and was appointed a teacher in the Model School connected with the institution in 1848. In 1853 he went to Hamilton to organize the Public Schools of that city. In 1858 he returned to Toronto as First Master in the Provincial Grammar School. In 1859 he became Mathematical and Science Master in the Normal School. In 1866, on the death of Thomas Jaffray Robertson, Dr. Sangster was appointed to the principalship. He resigned this position in July, 1871.

While teaching in the Normal School he was Professor of Chemistry and Botany in Victoria University.

After retiring from teaching, he began the active practice of medicine in Port Perry. He continued to reside there until his sudden death at the King Edward Hotel, Toronto, on January 27th, 1904. In November, 1894, he was elected a member of the Ontario Medical Council and in that body became the leader of the Medical Defence Association.

Dr. Sangster was twice married; in 1851 to Miss Mary Price, Toronto; and in 1871 to Miss Caroline Elizabeth McCausland, Toronto.

He was the author of works on Arithmetic, Algebra, Chemistry, and Natural Philosophy, which were extensively used throughout the Province.

Henry William Davies, M A., D.D.

Henry William Davies, M.A., D.D.

DR. DAVIES, the third Principal of the Toronto Normal School, was born in Ogdensburg, N.Y., June 24th, 1834. He was educated at Trinity College, Toronto, from which he was graduated B.A. in 1855, M.A. in 1858, B.D. in 1865, and D.D. in 1870. In 1858 he was appointed Head Master of the Cornwall Grammar School, where he gave special attention in his teaching and addresses to the deportment of students and to language studies. He acted also as assistant to the Venerable Archdeacon Patton of Trinity Church, Cornwall. In 1866 he became Second Master in the Toronto Normal School, and on the retiring of Dr. Sangster from the principalship, he succeeded to that office. He was Principal till 1884 when he resigned. His death occurred in March, 1895.

After coming to Toronto, he was assistant to the rector of Holy Trinity Church, and, later on, to the Rector of St. Luke's Church.

In 1858 he married Emily Todd, youngest daughter of William Poyntz Patrick, of Suffolk, England.

Dr. Davies was the author of two English grammars which were extensively used for many years in the schools of Ontario : an elementary grammar, for public schools and an advanced work for High Schools.

He had charge of the departmental examinations for the Province of Ontario for some years after he retired from the Toronto Normal School.

THOMAS KIRKLAND, M.A.

Thomas Kirkland, M.A.

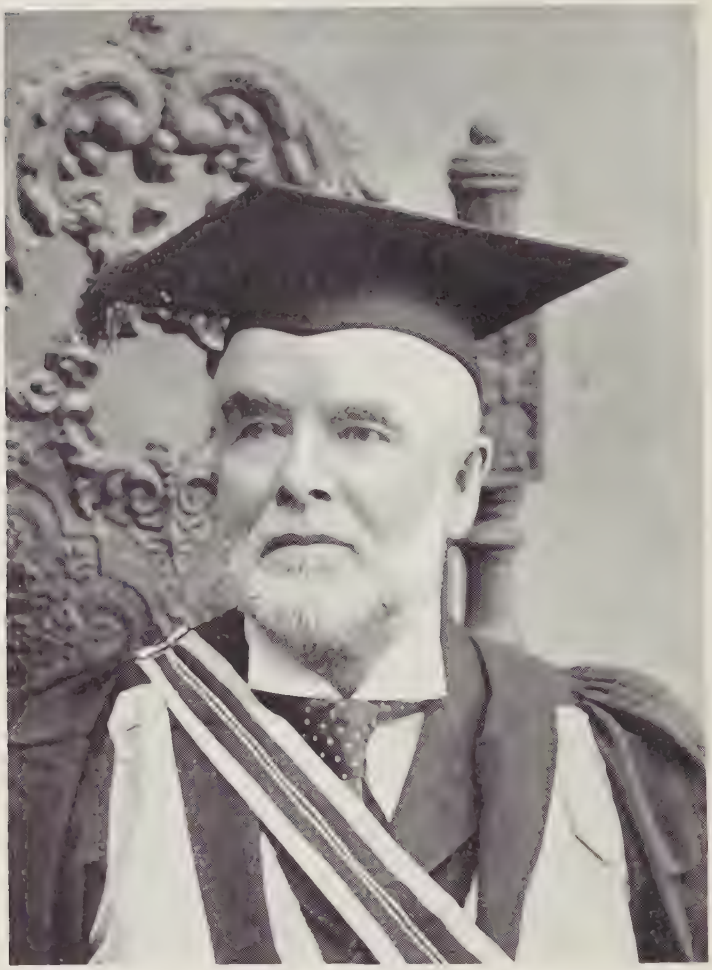
THOMAS KIRKLAND, M.A., fourth Principal of the Toronto Normal School, was born near Tanderagee, County Armagh, Ireland, on August 12th, 1835. He was a graduate of the Dublin Normal School, of the Albert College of Agriculture, and of Toronto University, from which he was graduated B.A. in 1870, and M.A. in 1871.

Coming to Canada in 1854, he was appointed Assistant Master in the Oshawa Central School, and Head Master in the following year. In 1856-7 he was Head Master of the Henry Street School in the town of Whitby, and in 1858 he became Mathematical Master in the Barrie Grammar School, then a large boarding school under the Rev. William Checkley. In 1863 he was appointed Head Master of the Whitby Grammar School, which position he held till 1871, when he was selected by Dr. Ryerson for the new position of Science Master in the Toronto Normal School. He held this position till 1884, when, on the retirement of Dr. Davies, he was appointed to the principalship by Dr. Ross, at that time the Minister of Education. He filled this position with great acceptance until his death on December 31st, 1898.

He was President of the Ontario Teachers' Association at the time of his death, having been elected at the meeting in April, 1898.

In 1863 he married Jane Todd, daughter of the Rev. Robert Hill Thornton, D.D., of Oshawa.

Mr. Kirkland was the author of works on Elementary Statics and Elementary Chemistry, and the joint author of works on Arithmetic which have been used as text-books in all the provinces of the Dominion.



John A. MacCabe, M.A., LL.D.

John A. MacCabe, M.A., LL.D.

DR. MACCABE was born in the County of Cavan, Ireland, January 9th, 1842. He was educated in the Irish National Schools, in the Dublin Normal School, where he took the two courses, general and special, and in the Roman Catholic University of Dublin. He was English and Mathematical Master in the diocesan academies of Belfast, Kilmore and Killarney, which positions he filled in the order named. Coming to Nova Scotia in 1869, he was appointed Mathematical Master in the Provincial Normal School at Truro; but at his own request was soon transferred to the English mastership of that institution. In 1875, on the opening of a second Normal School in Ontario, at Ottawa, he was appointed Principal. He managed this institution with marked ability till his death on November 30th, 1902.

In 1877 he received the degree of M.A. from the University of Ottawa, and that of LL.D. in 1889.

He was elected President of the Dominion Educational Association at its meeting in Halifax in 1898.

He was twice married; in 1869, to Kate Anna, only daughter of James Kelly, County Clare, Ireland, and in 1902, to Almira, daughter of R. A. Sims, Ottawa.

He was the author of a work on English Grammar, one on Language Lessons, another on Methods of Teaching Language and Grammar, and a hand-book of Methods for Teaching Phonic Reading. He prepared Parts I. and II. of the Canadian Catholic Reader and the companion to the same books; also a History of England.

THIS booklet is issued as a souvenir to all teachers and others who so freely contributed to the erection of tablets to the memory of the Past Principals of the Ontario Normal Schools. A short time after the sudden and lamented death of the late Dr. Sangster, a meeting was called by notices in the Toronto daily papers, to consider the desirability of taking steps to erect some memorials to these gentlemen. At this meeting, the following committee was appointed:—James L. Hughes, Chairman; William Scott, M.A., Treasurer; W. J. Hendry, Secretary; Miss Kate A. Scarlett, Mr. W. A. Douglas, Mr. John P. Martin.

The committee issued a request for funds, through the Inspectors, to the teachers throughout Ontario, and their request met with a hearty response from all parts of the province.

The tablets were unveiled before a large audience in Toronto on January 14th, 1905. Addresses were delivered by the following gentlemen:—E. J. Barrick, M.D., for Thomas Jaffray Robertson; James S. Fullerton, K.C., for John Herbert Sangster; William Britton, M.D., for Henry W. Davies; J. E. Farewell, M.A., for Thomas Kirkland. Letters were read from several prominent educators approving of the erection of the tablets, one from J. George Hodgins, being of special interest as it gave a sketch of the establishment and development of Normal Schools in Ontario.

The tablet to the memory of J. A. MacCabe, was unveiled in Ottawa by the Hon. R. W. Scott.

THE STAMP OF EXCELLENCE